



Town of Griswold
28 Main Street
Griswold, CT 06351
Board of Selectman
Special Meeting
Griswold Town Hall
Monday, April 18, 2011
2:00 PM
APPROVED MINUTES



1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 2:05 PM by First Selectman, Philip Anthony.

Members Present: Philip Anthony, First Selectman
Steve Mikutel, Second Selectman
Theresa Madonna, Third Selectwoman
Carl Fontneau, Town Planner
Paul Lach, Economic Development Commission Member

2. **Discussion and possible action on extending current contract with Janet's Sweeping on a four year renewal option** – this item was discussed later
3. **Presentation and possible action on Main Street Streetscape Project as listed**
 - i. Fuss and O'Neill – gave brief presentation on their plan. They emphasized mobility and the relationships between automobile, pedestrian, parking, bicyclists to the traffic counting and the concept of movement through a space, particularly town centers. The three biggest components of Fuss and O'Neill are the Transportation Department and Development Services which include the planning component and landscape architecture. Fuss and O'Neill is busy with projects which allows them to choose the projects they consider to be their specialty, which is what this project is considered. They noted the possible development of the rail line if potential Indian Casinos are built in Palmer, MA. The river front and Veteran's Park were mentioned with the possibility of bringing that walkway all the way through to connect to downtown. They touched on corridor and access management to take some of the stress off the main roadway. Communication was stressed between the town, the public and Fuss and O'Neill, through public workshops as an example. They also use a follow the money concept, to be aware of what other funding is or may be available in the near future, that may benefit the current project, and tailoring that project towards the possibility of expansion through further grant availability. Project timeline was also discussed. T. Madonna asked what would be the process of getting the property owners of downtown actively involved. Once it is understood who the stake holders are, it is decided to bring them all together or divide and conquer. Fuss and O'Neill would hold stake holder meetings two or three days in a row and schedule meetings with maps and all materials including power point presentations and learn the likes and dislikes, document them, and move forward with that information. In conjunction with these meetings they would hold two public meetings, one in the

beginning of the project and one towards the end. S. Mikutel asked what obstacles there may be in trying to tie the river walk into the downtown. It was commented getting by one of the old mills by the river with little room and a steep grade may be an obstacle.

- ii. Cate Oranchak Team – A review was given of team members Cate Oranchak, Pete Georgetti of Prime Engineering, Joe Zello of Beverly, MA. First step this team would do is find out what work has been done, what makes Griswold tick and review the Municipal Development Plan and review archives to understand what is important. Permitting and working with the state DOT was discussed not only for beginning the project but throughout the whole process. Parking was reviewed as an important issue to the town and the thought of creating more organized and creative parking along with traffic flow. Other subtasks of interest would be façade improvement plan, name and branding, farmer’s market and river walk concept. There specific specialty regarding main streets would be a benefit in gathering community spirit. They showed a hypothetical location for a pilot program to show the public what the whole project would look like. It was mentioned that understanding the past and present farming industry in the town may help with the name and branding and understanding of what the public likes. Also the large amount of glass windows present on Main Street allows for engaging with the merchants rather than putting up barriers with less visibility. S. Mikutel asked what is viewed as the main constraints in making this a successful project. Cate Oranchak replied finding a quick and easy way to make decisions, since so many decisions will be involved. P. Anthony commented the Board of Selectmen would be available for decisions and is looking for something feasible on the first round.
- iii. AKRF Team – Plan resolves around participation, programming, planning and policy together making up the project plan consisting of Phase I improvement plan and Phase II final master plan. Strategic planning would begin immediately with the town of Griswold and a public outreach process for development of what Griswold would like. AKRF is the facilitator and guide. A hands on public workshop would be scheduled first. It was discussed combining the historical attributes of Griswold along with the nearby changing suburban ways. Permitting with District 2, pedestrian traffic and safety were all discussed. Preliminary engineering would come up with scenarios to improve the roadway. Contact with CL&P would be made to inquire about possibility and costs of putting the utility lines underground. All intersections as well as the use of curb cuts would be looked at so as to plan for long term strategy, in order to help having to repeat or relocate something down the road. Façade improvement has to be looked at where the funds are coming from, the reimbursable rate as well as the agreement between the property owner and the town. They spoke about tying in the Veteran’s Housing, Slater Mill and Veteran’s Memorial Park into the streetscape amenities. AKRF has a strategic plan in place and is ready to move on this project and the resources to start immediately. AKRF responded they have about 195 people on staff with about 90 more comprised from the other two companies involved with the project. T. Madonna asked how they would get the stake holders engaged in the project. Brochures, e-mails, web blasts kiosks would all be put in place immediately to notify of the plans and the meetings and a community workshop at the first EDC meeting. P. Anthony commented he values the input of the public and most definitely the stake holders involved with the project, however cautions about taking too much time from the project in the gathering of all input and the process needs to be expedited.

- iv. Kent and Frost Team – Brian Kent opened by saying they are the local experts with wide experience and are genuinely committed to the success and creation of a realistic plan and represent the best value. The belief is the Town of Griswold and the EDC is the top of the team and then the stake holders, residents and state agencies. They commented the need to create a link from the river walk to Main Street and to create a unified appearance and make Main Street people friendly. The importance of being able to work with the DOT for permitting was discussed. Also, they would use the last traffic study done in 2008 when planning for the project. There would be planning for the possible future movement of utility lines underground, however, moving them at this time would be too costly. S. Mikutel commented there needs to be a way to draw the people that are frequenting the Lisbon Landing site to venture to downtown Griswold. It was mentioned that main street has great anchor buildings and historical structures to emphasize and build around. The designs for naming and branding, as well as the facades were discussed. A day or two of focus would be held for direct meetings with the stake holders. S. Mikutel had a concern about absent landlords. It was mentioned there are also businesses that are in those buildings that are a stake holder and they would take place in the meeting and hopefully relay to the absent property owner, their needs and desires in order for their business to prosper. Lastly, the outcome has to be realistic and meaningful, perhaps by bringing back some of the history and culture. Perhaps, the alleys could be come outside cafe spaces that are named, fun and have good lighting. The plan is to get the concept, meet with the stake holders and go right into the phase with putting into place some items that can be bolted down to the ground such as trash receptacles and benches and get the STEAP money rolling in for the town. We try to use local businesses to keep money in the community as much as possible and the Kent and Frost team is local. A marketing brochure for pride in downtown with pictures showing the plans could be generated in order to get people excited and involved in downtown. Kent and Frost inquired as to when a decision would be made. The Board replied within a week. T. Madonna asked why that was a concern. Kent and Frost responded that if they were chosen they would immediately begin research, even without a contract. S. Mikutel asked what Kent and Frost sees as the two biggest constraints for this project to be successful. Kent and Frost commented Phase II the part of being realistic, balancing aspirations with the realistic economic climate that we live in. Ownership can be a problem also, because the Town does not own the road or the buildings.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by T. Madonna, to take a recess. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. **Executive Session:** – Discussion and possible action on personnel matter

MOTION: Motion was made by T. Madonna, seconded by S. Mikutel, to reconvene the recessed meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion a personnel matter. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Executive Session ended.

2. **Discussion and possible action on extending current contract with Janet's Sweeping on a four year renewal option** – Brief discussion ensued stating that the existing contract

of March 16, 2009 with Janet's Sweeping allows for a four year renewal option at the original bid cost. T. Madonna felt the town should go out to bid as per the bidding ordinance.

MOTION: Motion was made by S. Mikutel, seconded by P. Anthony, to extend the existing contract with Janet's Sweeping for a term of one more year. **Motion carried. P. Anthony and S. Mikutel in favor, T. Madonna opposed.**

5. Adjournment

MOTION: Motion was made by T. Madonna, seconded by S. Mikutel to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Philip E. Anthony,
First Selectman,
Town of Griswold*